

Introduction



NEW COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

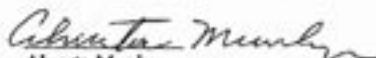
The Northwest #1 project is guided by several core principles related to process and substance. The principles, in turn, inform and guide the public planning process and ultimately the implementation of the revitalization plan. The following principles relate to the public planning process:

1. The District of Columbia and the Northwest #1 Council (hereby identified as "the Committee" for the purpose of this document) agree to a full partnership for all phases of this initiative including planning, defining boundaries, replacement a development, management, agenda and decision making. We may not always agree, but will work together to come up with what is best for the community.
2. The Committee agrees to a 1:1 replacement of the housing within the initiative boundary based upon a survey of the number of units and incomes of existing families. Existing families will have first right to return and no families shall be excluded solely based on income.
3. The Committee agrees to develop a right to return protocol and ultimately community standards.
4. The Committee will define all critical terms and elements of the redevelopment, to include unit mix, housing types, boundaries, tenure, income mix/affordability and any and all other terms used in this process.
5. The Committee will work together on the preservation of existing subsidies and expand affordable housing as part of the initiative. Further, the committee agrees to work together to secure all resources as necessary to carry out the initiative.
6. All new development in the area must include an affordable housing component, improvements to the area, and other elements that support the goals and aims of the committee. The Committee shall explore all tools to move toward this goal.
7. The initiative will provide "real" economic opportunities for residents, especially through job training and development, asset building, career development, homeownership, etc., for future and current residents.
8. The Committee will strive to include high quality education and human services opportunities for adults and children.
9. The Committee agrees to preserve and enhance the historic heritage of the community.
10. The initiative must provide a balance of mixed uses- residential, commercial, recreational and civic facilities.

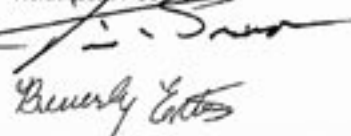
The principles were signed by the City Administrator for the District and the Northwest One Council officers on January 31, 2005

In witness hereof this 31st Day of January, 2005:


Robert C. Bobb
City Administrator
District of Columbia


Alverta Munlyn
Co-Chair
Northwest #1 Council




Beverly Epps

1. Introduction

In January 2005, the District of Columbia, in collaboration with the Northwest One Council, initiated a public planning process to revitalize a large portion of the Northwest One neighborhood. The project's goal was straightforward – to create a vibrant mixed-income community where residents have quality housing options, real economic opportunities and access to appropriate human services for adults and children. It grew from the need to address four critical issues – a concentration of violent crime, a concentration of poverty, a concentration of distressed housing and strong development pressures in the neighborhood.

Northwest One had one of the highest concentrations of violent crime and poverty in the District, and in early 2004, it witnessed one of the most brutal murders in recent DC history. The assassination of Princess Hansen sparked the HotSpot Initiative, a successful concentrated effort by multiple local and federal agencies and officials to focus their resources and decrease crime and improve the quality of life for residents living in high crime areas.

During the same time, three deeply subsidized housing developments in the neighborhood – Sursum Corda Cooperative, Temple Court Apartments and the Golden Rule Center – were considered physically distressed and under threat of foreclosure from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Any adverse actions by the private property owners or HUD could have resulted in the loss of those deeply subsidized units from the Section 8 program.

Northwest One is located between two rapidly changing neighborhoods – Mt. Vernon Triangle and the area known as NOMA (North of Massachusetts Avenue). Both of these neighborhoods are undergoing tremendous change. This change has put development pressure on Northwest One. For the most part, neighborhood perceptions and affordable housing restrictions have limited gentrification in the neighborhood. However, recent major decreases in crime, the potential easing of affordable housing restrictions and growth around the neighborhood have dramatically increased development interest in the neighborhood.

Thus, this plan looks at how to manage redevelopment and growth in a neighborhood in the path of gentrification to ensure that low-income families have the power to stay, live and flourish as their neighborhood changes and prospers. The plan looks at ways to rebuild the physical and human architecture of neighborhood – protect and expand affordable housing; give families the tools to become self-sufficient; rebuild community anchors like schools, libraries and recreation centers; and most importantly engage residents in decision making and the prospects of their community.

The Northwest One Redevelopment Strategy is a tool to help guide future redevelopment in the neighborhood. Current and future development pressures, along with changing neighborhood perceptions, decreasing crime and the need to address the concentration of deep poverty, and the expectation to retain low-income families during redevelopment require a plan to thoughtfully direct redevelopment efforts.

The Northwest One Redevelopment Strategy includes a broad vision and guiding principles for the creation and expansion of a new, integrated neighborhood, new and improved housing, roads, public facilities and community amenities. The vision and principles were developed through intensive consultation with many stakeholders, including: District agencies, local community organizations, non-profits, local foundations, churches, resident associations, schools, the Northwest One Council and neighborhood residents.

Physical Architecture and Human Architecture

The plan examines, evaluates and makes detailed recommendations for housing, public facilities, urban design, parks and open space and transportation. The plan also examines, evaluates and makes detailed recommendations on human capital – the social and human service tools needed to ensure family self-sufficiency during the redevelopment. Lastly, the plan examines the financial and development implications of the recommendations and charts a realistic development strategy. Along with the vision and principles, these recommendations make up the overall redevelopment strategy.

This strategy is not a rigid blueprint or master plan that is inflexible. Instead, it guides redevelopment by clearly articulating a vision, strategic direction and the underlying principles needed to create a high quality urban neighborhood. Over time, the plan is flexible enough to respond to new investment opportunities and community initiatives. The policies and market strategies of this framework become the basis for development control, investment decisions and where necessary, more detailed planning.



2. Vision

The vision for NW1 includes a vibrant mixed-income community where residents have quality housing options, economic opportunities and access to exceptional human services for adults and children. It is a community where all families have the tools and skills to sustain themselves and prosper in a dynamic environment.

3. Principles

The redevelopment process in Northwest One** is guided by several core principles related to the process and substance. The principles, in turn, inform and guide the public planning process and ultimately the implementation of the revitalization plan.

i. The Guiding Principles

The Northwest One Council, in consultation with the community, worked with the District of Columbia to develop and agree to a set of Guiding Principles to guide the planning process. The principles were signed by the City Administrator for the District of Columbia and the Northwest One Council Officers. The Guiding Principles are shown on page 6.

ii. Development Principles

In addition to the overarching Guiding Principles for the planning process, the District of Columbia and the Northwest One Council agreed to four more detailed development principles. These principles include:

Mixed-Income

To ensure the long-term viability of the neighborhood and its current families, a neighborhood that provides a range of housing and amenity options for a range of incomes is necessary. A neighborhood that is accessible to low, moderate and market-rate families provides opportunities for high-quality amenities and economic mobility for all. The standard definition of mixed-income for this plan is:

- one third of units will be **Deeply Subsidized** (for families earning less than 30 percent of area median income)
- one third of units will be **Affordable** (for families earning between 30 and 80 percent of area median income)
- one third of units will be **Market-rate** (for families earning above 80 percent of area median income)

1:1 Replacement

Redevelopment must not result in a net loss of deeply subsidized units. There are approximately 520 deeply subsidized units initially identified for redevelopment.

Right to Return/ Right to Stay

Current families have the first right to return to a redeveloped neighborhood and will not be discriminated upon based solely upon economic factors. Thus, if a family currently pays one-third of its income for rent, it will also do so in a redeveloped neighborhood.

It was also agreed that to the maximum extent possible, there would be minimal displacement and current families would have the right to “stay” in the neighborhood through access to “Build First” housing.

Build First

The District agreed, to the maximum extent possible, to build new housing first on publicly owned or acquired land. By “building first”, neighborhood families are able to move out of their existing units into new units in the neighborhood. Families do not have to leave their neighborhood during redevelopment and may possibly move only once – into their permanent new home.

** note – when the project was initiated, the neighborhood now referred to as Northwest One, was referred to as Sursum Corda neighborhood.



4. Process

The Northwest One Redevelopment plan process began in earnest in spring of 2004. At that time, the community began to organize to work with the District to deal with violent crime in the neighborhood and to deal with the threatened loss of affordable housing.

Steering Committee

An official Steering Committee was created. It comprised senior District officials, including the City Administrator Robert Bobb and Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, Stan Jackson, along with community leaders from Northwest One and their technical advisors. The Steering Committee met several times during the development of the plan to set the process for completion and to review critical issues.

Northwest One Council

Towards the end of 2004, the community began the formation of a non-profit organization, the Northwest One Council, Inc. (NW1 Council), to work closely with the district to develop and implement the plan. The NW1 Council is comprised of resident leaders from each of the affected housing developments, along with members of local organizations and associations. It also includes participation from the Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners and the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless and the Washington Interfaith Network.

Working Group

The plan prioritized resident input and the District agreed that it was paramount for the community to shape the vision for the creation of an enhanced and integrated neighborhood. To that end, the NW1 Council assisted the District in its outreach efforts to local residents. Upon completion of a set of guiding principles to steer the process, the District and the NW1 Council met as a working group, on a weekly basis, to begin planning and to help residents understand the development process. These weekly work sessions occurred for over ten months until a draft of the plan was complete. During this time, the guiding principles were used to fully realize the program for the redevelopment plan and the groundwork was laid for creating the vision for a revitalized neighborhood. This group worked to coordinate an informal cook out and community celebration in June, 2005 in advance of the public project kick-off and a series of planning workshops.

Kick-Off and Charrette

The project was officially kicked off on June 21, 2005 by Mayor Anthony A. Williams and City Administrator Robert Bobb. A series of community planning workshops, commonly referred to as a “charrette,” were held from July 6 to July 9, 2005. This intensive 4 day workshop ran from early in the morning until late in the evening and was open to all. It provided residents the opportunity to work directly with the planners, architects, development advisors and District officials to create the vision and refine the program based on the guiding principles. More than 500 people participated in the charrette during the four days.

Public input throughout the planning process was critical. It helped create the Guiding Principles, lay down a vision, identify priority issues and create a viable program. The partnership between the NW1 Council and the District will continue during the implementation and development process to ensure residents the same high level of input and decision making.

5. Summary

The redevelopment plan was developed out of a partnership between the community and the District through an intensive community planning process. A revitalized neighborhood provides many opportunities for neighborhood families, including improved housing, new jobs and training, new schools and recreation and better opportunities. It also helps the District provide additional affordable housing in the City and manage growth in a way that ensures the quality of life of all residents is improved. However, above all else, the District wants to ensure that low-income families in Northwest One have the power to stay and flourish as their neighborhood changes and prospers. This plan provides the tools to make sure that this happens.

